

Lent Four
Living Ink: Jesus Welcomes Sinners
March 6, 2016
10:30 a.m.

— GATHERING —

Chimes call us to worship

Lucia Unrau

Call to Worship

LuAnn Stuckey

L: Tell me, repentant people, who is the Lord our God?

P: The Lord is our deliverer, who hears our confession and forgives our sin.

L: Tell me, blessed people, who is the Lord our God?

P: The Lord is our secret hideout, who surrounds us with songs of rescue.

L: Tell me, righteous people, whom do we worship?

All: We worship the God of reconciliation who makes all things new! Let us rejoice and be glad!

Welcome

Invocation

— PRAISING —

***Opening Hymn**

“Oh, have you not heard”

HWB 606

***Confessing and Reconciling
Confession**

All: Gracious God, hear our plea for forgiveness.

We fail to develop our God-given abilities.

We neglect the nurture of our own best selves.

We serve, but sometimes with resentment.

We try to hoard your love, O God,

as the Israelites tried to hoard manna in the wilderness.

Transform us by your Spirit and renew our minds.

(silence)

Assurance of God’s Grace

L: Sisters and brothers, God is at work in us and among us!

God rejoices over each of us.

Our loving God welcomes us with arms outstretched.

Today, receive God’s embrace – not as a servant but as a beloved child.

***Hymn**

“Let there be light, Lord God”

HWB 371

Pastoral Prayer

Wanda Stopher

— PROCLAIMING —

Time with Children

Hymn

“I love to tell the story”

(Sing v.1)

HWB 398

Conversation

Gloria Hernandez Bucher
and

Hymn

“I love to tell the story”

(Sing v.2)

HWB 398

Gospel Reading by Logos

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Readers: Melissa Friesen, Cheri Slotter, Betty Sommer, Gary Wetherill

Sermon

Ray Person

Time of Silent Reflection

— RESPONDING —

***Hymn of Response**

“O God, how we have wandered”

STS 58

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

“Interlude”

(Children bring their books forward during the offertory)

Mark Hayes

***Hymn of Dedication**

“Praise God from whom”

(Sing vs. A)

HWB 119

***Prayer of Dedication**

— SENDING —

***Hymn**

“Go, my children”

HWB 433

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

**Please stand, or remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.*

HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book STS – Sing the Story

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

101 S. Jackson Street

Bluffton, Ohio 45817

Phone: 419-358-5766

Website: fmcbluffton.org

Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Pastor – Wanda – Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday

Associate Pastor – Steve – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday

Director of Youth Ministries – Shannon -- Tuesday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Custodian's schedule: 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; weekends as needed

GREETERS: Doug and Paula Luginbill, Todd Rainey

HOST: Mary Amstutz

NURSERY WORKERS TODAY: SS – Hannah Combs and Lu Derstine

Worship – Bruce Steingass, Amy Freeman, Kendra Nickel, Ellie Nickel

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – Laura and Greg Hartzler

Worship – John and Julie Mackey, Sunita Hooley

SOUND SYSTEM: Don Pannabecker

CHANCEL: Gregg Luginbuhl and Alison King

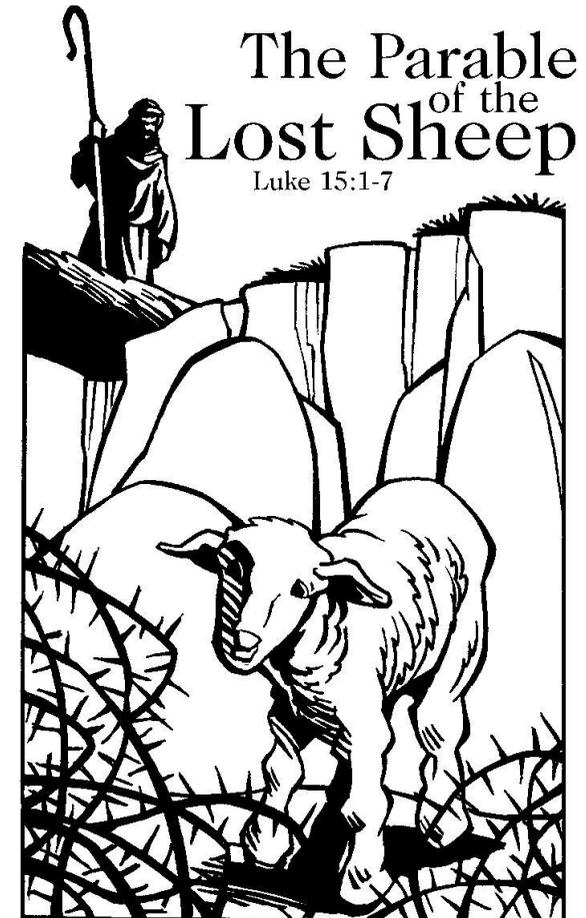
The video of the most recent worship service may be viewed on the church's homepage, www.fmcbluffton.org. Videos normally are posted on the Tuesday following the service. Previously recorded worship service videos may be found at tinyurl.com/fmc-videos

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Worship attendance last Sunday	246
Worship attendance at Maple Crest last Sunday (FMC DVD)	8
Sunday school attendance last Sunday	N/A
Spending plan giving Feb. 28, 2016	\$5,337.43
2016 Proposed spending plan	\$418,276.00
The offering Feb. 28 totaled \$8,557.91. Money was received for these special funds: Grades P-5 th - \$10.73, Grades 9-12-\$20; Community- \$1, Sojourners - \$9, Faith and Life - \$7, Deacons' Benevolent - \$2,245, First Night - \$412, Kitchen service - \$7.70, Rejoice - \$27.80, Capital campaign - \$145, MDS - \$50, Easter flowers - \$30.25, Rejoice - \$27.80, MCC health kits - \$90, Habitat - \$20, SHYF-\$285.	

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor – Wanda Stopher – 419-551-1079 -- fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu
Associate Pastor – Steven Yoder – 419-369-4753 (h) - fmc.steve@bluffton.edu
Youth Ministry Director – Shannon Thiebeau – fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu
Director of Music – Mark Suderman
Organist Coordinator – Lucia Unrau
Custodian – Mick Hardy
Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner - fmc@bluffton.edu



The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Luke 15:1-7

Praise God for protecting Mission Network personnel and our partners in Burkina Faso during the coup last September and during the January attacks. May Christians share the good news of the Prince of Peace in this time of fear and uncertainty.

– Mennonite Mission Network

The Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale was required to find a new venue after several successful seasons in Dalton, Ohio. With a solid 50-year history in Wayne County, organizers have decided to move the 2016 Relief Sale to the fairgrounds in Wooster. The 2016 Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale will be held August 5-6, 2016. This location can accommodate the auctions and the food stands, but some tents may need to be erected on the grounds. There is plenty of room for parking, kids' activities and volleyball. Plans are being made for the 2016 Kickoff Meeting in the Wayne County area. Details will be available soon.

Tickets are available for the Buffton University Artist Series performance by the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17 in Yoder Recital Hall. The first act will be a performance of "The Pirates of Penzance." During the second act, the cast will take requests for impromptu performances of other Gilbert and Sullivan works. NYGASP formed four decades ago as a street theatre. A reception will follow the performance. Reserved seats are \$25 for adults, \$20 for senior citizens and non-Bluffton students and \$10 for children ages 6-13. Children ages 5 and under are admitted free. Tickets are available at <http://tickets.bluffton.edu>, or at Marbeck Center information desk.

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

Happy birthday to Mary Boyer, 92, March 8; Gene Caskey, 82, March 12.

A memorial service was held yesterday for Wanda S. Pannabecker, who died Feb. 28, 2016 at the Mennonite Memorial Home. We extend our condolences to Wanda's family, including her children, Philip (Jan), Tucson, AZ; John (Rachel), North Newton, KS; James (Karen), Natural Bridge, VA; Tom (Helen), Tucson, AZ; and Mary (Fred) Steiner, Bluffton, and their families, and to Wanda's sister-in-law, Alice Ruth (Bob) Ramseyer,

Welcoming Statement

In response to God's unconditional love for all people, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome you to join us on our journey of faith in Jesus Christ. We are committed to breaking down dividing walls and building community where all are loved and accepted. We believe in active inclusion and invite each one to participate in the life and ministry of our congregation.

TODAY, March 6, 2016

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:00 a.m.	Coffee time, FH
9:15 a.m.	Christian education
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, Ray Person preaching
Noon	Connections class potluck

THIS WEEK

Tuesday (3/8)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m. parlor Education, 6 p.m., parlor
Wednesday (3/9)	First Night, supper 5:30 p.m., program 6 p.m., FH Cherub choir 6 p.m.; Adult bells 6:30 p.m. Jubilate, 6:45 p.m.; Youth bells, 7:15 p.m.
Thursday (3/10)	MPS, 6:30 p.m., parlor Nurture, 7 p.m., library Ride to Remember planning, 7 p.m., AR

NEXT WEEK

9:00 a.m.	Coffee time, FH
9:15 a.m.	Christian Education; Adult Fellowship, FH
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, Wanda Stopher preaching Scripture: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

Welcome to our worship service today. Please sign and pass the friendship pads in the pews. Wireless hearing aids are available. If you would like your children watched over while you worship, our staff will care for them in the nursery downstairs. Worship activity bags for children are available.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we welcome guest preacher, Ray Person, professor of religion at Ohio Northern University.

Update on Steve and Janet Yoder, 03-4-16

Steve Yoder has returned to the Intensive Care Unit at Cleveland Clinic in preparation for the total artificial heart pump surgery, which will take place March 7. At this time Steve and Janet have been advised not to receive visitors. Continued prayers are appreciated. Again, thanks for your continued prayers. -- Steve and Janet

This weekend, members of Jubilate and Youth Choir are participating in the Mennonite Youth Choir Festival at Goshen College. They have spent the last several months learning sacred choral music and rehearsed it yesterday with other choirs. They will have a concert today. First Mennonite youth participating are Theo Andreas, Anna Biesecker-Mast, Jacob Biesecker-Mast, Kayleigh Coffman, Patrick Estell, Rebecca Estell, Ben Hartzler, Ellie Hartzler, Ellie Nickel, Ethan Nickel, and John Paul Yoder.

Deadline for Easter flowers March 11: If you wish to purchase flowers in memory or honor of loved ones, please complete one of the order forms located on the small table outside the church office. Put the form and payment in the offering plate or drop them off at the church office. **Orders must be submitted to the church office by Monday, March 11.**

This summer's Central District Conference annual meeting will be June 23-25 at Columbus Mennonite Church, with the theme of *Abounding in Love ... Abiding in Grace*. We can send up to 18 delegates, as well as a high school age youth delegate. If you are interested in serving as a delegate, please notify the church office (fmc@bluffton.edu or 419-358-5766.) If you want to learn more about the CDC annual meeting, ask Darryl Nester or Kendra Nickel.

In Steve Yoder's absence, Wanda Stopher will coordinate pastoral care with assistance from Ruth Naylor. Please don't hesitate to call Wanda at 419-551-1079. You may also call Ruth at 419-358-6309.

First Night order forms are available at the ticket table in the fellowship hall. The menu and program details are included on the forms. You may purchase tickets today in the fellowship hall and **on Monday in the office from 9 a.m.-noon; payment is due no later than noon Monday.** Cost is \$4/person and \$12/family for each night. A vegetarian option will be available each night.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Service Group of the Mennonite Memorial Home Communities of Ohio will hold their annual Easter bake sale on Saturday, March 19. The bake sale will feature a variety of home-baked goods including cinnamon rolls, cakes, cookies and breads. This annual event will be held in the MMH lobby from 9 a.m.-noon.

In honor of International Women's Day on March 8, Bluffton Ten Thousand Villages and Bluffton University Women's Circle are hosting a women's clothing drive during the month of March. Gently used professional clothing, shoes, and bags will be collected and donated to Hope House in Findlay. As a thank you for donating, we'll give you a coupon good for 20% off one item at Ten Thousand Villages. Bring donations to Ten Thousand Villages, Bluffton, through March 31.

The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library, in coordination with Findlay/Hancock County Welcoming Community Initiative, will hold a panel discussion highlighting "Unknown Local Stories of Immigration" from 6-7 p.m. Thursday, March 10 at Glenwood Middle School, Findlay. The event will provide a local perspective on immigration through the eyes of Hancock County residents who are immigrants from Cambodia, Philippines, Mexico and Germany. Featured panelists will include Miev Chan, a member of First Mennonite, and other immigrants from Germany, Cambodia, Philippines, and Mexico. This is free and open to the public. Register by email to rsvp@FindlayHancockChamber.com or call 419.422.3313.

Join us for another fun-filled summer at Camp Friedenswald! This summer we look forward to engaging the New Testament text, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, as we ask the question "Who is Wise?" We are excited to work with this text as we ask questions about our world and learn about the wisdom that those questions can bring, led by our summer worship team and each week's camp pastor. Led by counselors with a love for Jesus, nurturing young people, and having fun, campers will enjoy a week of being unplugged. For more information on the summer schedule, see <https://friedenswald.org/summer-camps/>. -- Camp Friedenswald